
PAGODA RED



PAIR OF PLUM BLOSSOM LOTUS SLIPPERS

\$228

c. 1850 • Northern China, China • Silk, Fabric • Collection #PR0013DDD

W: 3.0" D: 7.5" H: 2.5"

These pointed silk slippers, beautifully embroidered with pink plum blossoms, were shaped to resemble a lotus bud and enhanced the diminutive shape of bound feet. A practice that began in the Tang dynasty and reached the height of its popularity during the Qing dynasty, foot binding was a painful process intended to make a woman's feet as small as possible by restricting bone growth from an early age. The smaller the feet the more attractive and erotic they were, giving elite women a mark of elegance and a distinctive - albeit tortured - gait of small, light steps. Continued...



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These beautifully preserved lotus slippers give us a glimpse into this curious practice and the complicated role fashion played in gender identity throughout China's past.



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